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C O N F I D E N T I A L THE HAGUE 000584

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STATE FOR ISN/CB, VCI/CCA, L/NPV, IO/MPR,
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NSC FOR LUTES
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TAGS: PARM PREL OPCW CWC

SUBJECT: CWC: UPDATE ON DIRECTOR-GENERAL (DG) SELECTION

REF: A. THE HAGUE 566
1B. THE HAGUE 518

Classified By: Janet E. Beik for reasons 1.4 (B) and (D)

This is CWC-56-09

SUMMARY

11. (SBU) Dr. Robert Mikulak, ISN/CB Director and U.S. Representative to the Executive Council (EC), visited The Hague September 24 to consult with key delegations on the selection of a new Director-General (DG) for the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). Accompanied by Delreps, Mikulak met with Ambassador Jorge Lomonaco (Mexico), the EC Chairperson; Ambassador Manbir Singh of India; Delegate Chen Kai of China; Ambassador Kirill Gevorgian of Russia; Ambassador Chaudhry of Pakistan; and Ambassador Martabit of Chile. Prior to Mikulak's visit, Delrep Beik called on the Korean and Sri Lankan Ambassadors to discuss the same issue. The DG race appears to be narrowing to three major candidates, with the first straw poll likely the week of September 29.

12. (U) Other consultations were held during the week on Articles VII, X and the Budget and will be reported septel.

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL CHAIRPERSON

13. (C) During Mikulak's short visit to The Hague September 24, he and Delrep met with EC Chairperson Jorge Lomonaco (Mexico) to discuss progress on his consultations and "confessional meetings" on the choice of the Director-General. As he has told everyone who asks, Lomonaco described his first round of consultations as completed, with "clear and consistent trends" across all of the regional groups. Only two countries did not respond to his calls, and "very few" expressed no preferences.

Most appear to have some flexibility in their choices, and there was no "north/south" divide. Lomonaco takes all of those as good signs that consensus in the Council may well be possible. He has already spoken to the candidates with less support. However, he is not confident that any of them will withdraw voluntarily.

¶4. (C) Lomonaco has called for an informal meeting September 29 to report to everyone what he has done and to answer questions. If there are still no withdrawals from the race, he will hold a straw poll on October 2 following the EC consultation on the agenda. He will ask delegations to rank order all seven candidates and weigh each selection so that the results will show a broad range of support. Only EC members will vote, but non-EC member states will be permitted to observe. Lomonaco expects from what delegations have told him -- which, he acknowledged might not be how they would vote in a secret ballot -- that three candidates would emerge in close competition at the top with a large gap between those three and the other four. (Del comment: We believe the top three are the same as the U.S. top choices. End comment.)

¶5. (C) There are lots of rumors flying about what happens if the EC fails to agree on a candidate by the end of the session (October 16), Lomonaco said; however, he refuses to discuss his Plan B. He told Mikulak that it would be irresponsible for him not to be planning for contingencies, but he has no intention of letting this choice go to the Conference of States Parties. One message he intends to give delegations next week is that success in this enterprise cannot be measured by having a DG; rather, the shape of the Council -- the EC doing its job -- is the measure of success.

¶6. (C) On other EC issues, Lomonaco said the U.S. 90-day report is likely to generate a lot of discussion for publishing the projected dates beyond 2012 for the first time. He has asked Vice Chairman Lohman to chair a discussion of the EC visit report; he (Lomonaco) will attend but not chair and he hopes that the South African and Indian delegates who were part of the group and drafted the report will defend it from attacks by Iran or others. Delrep inquired about the Libyan request for an extension of their destruction deadline. Lomonaco noted ironically that Libya has taken a page from the U.S. presentations and asked in return whether the U.S. will block the extension. Mikulak said we would not block consensus but we do have concerns over the lack of progress and lack of transparency by Libya. On the budget, Lomonaco does not see major obstacles; he has put the Chinese and Indian delegations on notice to resolve their differences over the number of industry inspections and not to let others (Iran) take cover behind them.

INDIAN AMBASSADOR

¶7. (C) Mikulak and Delrep met with Indian Ambassador Manbir Singh on September 24. Singh stated that he was pleased with the consultations and the number of good candidates; however, the "field is crowded." He claimed not to know where the Asian candidate (Sudjanan of Indonesia) stands, and had heard that the other NAM candidate (Dani of Algeria) had "not been so competent" in the chair (of the Second Review Conference). The strongest candidates, in his estimation, are the UK and German candidates, with his preference going with

Freeman (UK) for continuity. Some ambassadors had remarked on Freeman's "sharp edges" but were appreciative of his work on behalf of the Organization. Mikulak noted the three strong candidates under consideration by the U.S. Singh noted wryly that "reducing the field would help us."

¶ 8. (C) In addition to the DG selection, Mikulak and Singh discussed budget issues, including the number of industry inspections. Singh explained that India supports a strong verification regime, particularly in its "difficult neighborhood," but that the chemical industries mount a strong lobby against additional inspections. Mikulak described how U.S. relations with private industry had built up over the years, with industry increasingly supportive of the inspection regime. He also noted the large number of other chemical production facilities (OCPFs) and the need to better identify the small number of facilities that are of interest under the Convention. Singh responded that U.S. proposals on industry will carry more weight when it makes progress on destruction, and that India and others still regard the destruction of chemical weapons as the first and foremost goal of the Convention.

¶ 9. (C) Singh said Iran has grave concerns about the deadlines and had been meeting with some countries to discuss the issue. The Iranians have called for discussion of the report of the EC visit to the U.S. However, the group has defended the report as a factual account of their visit. In an interesting aside, Singh said he was puzzled by the repeated Iranian objections to "noting" reports and had looked up the word in the Farsi translations (Singh previously served in Tehran); it does not carry a meaning different from the English and does not connote approval. However, the Iranian culture, he said, sees someone taking notes as submissive to the person giving the notes (like a student to his teacher) and thus the Iranian delegation is regarded as weak for "noting" reports. Singh did not offer a solution to this cultural divide that has slowed so many Council sessions to a standstill.

MEETING WITH THE CHINESE DELEGATION

¶ 10. (C) Mikulak and Delreps met with Chinese Delegates Chen Kai, Li Dong and Xiong Shulong on September 24. Chen Kai did not reveal China's preferences for the DG candidates, saying most delegations have not yet made a choice. He emphasized the importance of personalities, skills and experience for the job and said three candidates are mentioned more often than others on these factors. The Asian candidate (Ambassador Sudjanaan of Indonesia) has some support, but Chen said there is no group candidate.

¶ 11. (SBU) On the budget, Chen noted China's objection to the numbers of inspections at other chemical production facilities (OCPFs), and said China does not want a "repeat of last year." The increase is small, he said, but still an increase, and he cited China's interpretation of the CSP budget decision in 2008 as agreement not to increase the numbers of inspections while consultations on the selection process have not come to resolution. Mikulak responded that the large number of OCPFs and the range among them indicate the need to find the facilities that pose the greatest risk, but that did not mean that we

can wait for a perfect political solution. Chen stated that China's concern is "not a burden issue" as China is close to the cap for inspections already, but is based on principle.

¶12. (C) Chen then raised the U.S. 90-day report and its projected dates for the completion of destruction beyond the 2012 deadline. He said it will raise discussion in the Council. Li Dong asked about Libya's request for a deadline extension. Delrep replied that the U.S. is concerned about Libyan delays, but that we would likely raise our questions privately with Libya rather than in the Council. Chen expressed concern over the "trend" to extend deadlines following U.S. admission of dates beyond the final deadline.

OTHER ASIAN VIEWS

¶13. (C) Mikulak and Delrep met Pakistani Ambassador Ahmad Chaudhry and Delegate Kehkeshan Azar on September 24. Chaudhry attributed Lomonaco's support amongst EC members for managing the DG selection process to the roadmap he presented at the July EC session. He said that before the July EC there were big differences on procedure; however, Chaudhry described the roadmap as a genuine attempt to find consensus and said that Ogenuine attempt to find consensus and said that Lomonaco's continued integrity and sincerity are key to the process running smoothly. Chaudhry opined that Lomonaco should start using straw polls quickly to augment his "soundings," ensuring the confidentiality of and confidence in such polls. He suggested that a candidate could "do the maths" to see if they might have more support in the CSP and try to take any final decision beyond the EC. Mikulak stressed that the EC must not be circumvented and that it must recommend one candidate to the CSP. Chaudhry was skeptical that the EC will be able to reach a decision by the end of its upcoming October session.

¶14. (C) Turning to the candidates, Chaudhry said the field is divided between front-runners and others; he referred to Uzumcu, Freeman and Gottwald as the front-runners and all enjoying a great deal of support. Pakistan is very committed to the CWC and the OPCW and, as such, wants the most competent candidate to be the next DG. Chaudhry said his sense is that more and more countries share Pakistan's thinking on the issue. While some countries are making overtures of reciprocal agreements in exchange for support of their candidate, Chaudhry stated that Pakistan will not enter in to any such "reciprocals."

¶15. (C) Before Mikulak's visit, Delrep called on South Korean Ambassador Young-won Kim on September 21 to discuss the DG selection. Kim noted that Asia has no group candidate and that each EC state will decide on its own. Korea has not yet made a selection, and Kim asked how the U.S. would advise them. Delrep responded that the U.S. does not yet have a single preference but is considering carefully three candidates (Freeman/UK, Gottwald/Germany, and Uzumcu/Turkey). Kim stated that Freeman is certainly the best candidate for continuity, but noted that Turkey is strongly supporting Uzumcu and that he appeared very well prepared. Delrep noted the importance of consensus in the Council, if at all possible, to avoid choosing a candidate weakened by a protracted and public battle as had happened in the IAEA.

¶16. (C) Delrep called on Sri Lankan Ambassador

Grace Asirwatham on September 22. Asirwatham stated that Sri Lanka's top three DG candidates were the same as those of the U.S. and that her government had not yet made a first choice. She emphasized the importance of personal leadership qualities and the choice of the best possible candidate. Delrep asked about the Ambassador's statements earlier in the year supporting a regional rotation of the DG position. Asirwatham said it is important to have candidates from all regions eligible, and that the position should rotate among regions, but not in a fixed rotation. She said the Asian group will all decide on a national basis, as will the Non-Aligned Movement. "We are not meeting in NAM to discuss a common choice," she said. She noted that some of the African ambassadors are ready to support someone other than Ambassador Dani (Algeria) in a secret straw poll, despite his endorsement from the African Union. By her account, Asirwatham appears to have a central role in her government's decision and is basing her recommendation largely on the candidates' presentations at the July EC.

¶17. (C) On other EC issues, Asirwatham described the meeting of Ambassadors of the Asian group last week to discuss the Asian seats on the Council. Qweek to discuss the Asian seats on the Council. There are five states interested but only four seats available. Iraq, she said, gave a good presentation and has a lot of support from the group. She said Iran was struggling to justify its continuing presence on the Council, as several countries feel it uses its vice chair for national purposes rather than representing the group. Iraq is in discussion with Qatar, and the group hopes they can work out a sub-regional rotation.

RUSSIAN VIEWS

¶18. (C) Mikulak and Delreps met with Russian Ambassador Kirill Gevorgian and Delegates Konstantin Gavrilov and Vladimir Ladanov on September 24. While Gevorgian was supposed to finish his term and return to Moscow during the summer, he confided that his successor is awaiting agreement from the Dutch government so Gevorgian plans to stay through the October EC session. Gevorgian said that there is no reason for any candidate to drop out of the DG race until the first straw poll, at the earliest. He asked who the U.S. pick is; Mikulak told him the top three, stressing that there is no preference amongst them, despite Gavrilov reiterating his previous joke that Freeman is obviously the U.S. preference given the U.S.-UK "special relationship." Gevorgian said that he had met personally with all seven candidates and expressed his view that all of them are strong, including the Indonesian, but he admitted that Dani -- while being a personal friend -- was weakened by his poor performance during the Second Review Conference.

¶19. (C) Moscow has not made a clear choice yet, according to Gevorgian, though he noted that Deputy Foreign Minister Ryabkov -- who will be influential in making Russia's choice -- served in Washington with Gottwald. Gevorgian stressed that the U.S. and Russia need to "find a common solution." He also raised the issue of the OPCW's senior management, noting that its composition will be affected by the next DG. Gevorgian even asked what WEOG would do if Gottwald were selected DG and Freeman remained as DDG; Mikulak ruled out the possibility of the DG and DDG both coming from WEOG, noting that the U.S. continues to support maintain the balance between developed and

developing countries. Mikulak also said that the U.S. and Russia both need to keep their senior management positions.

¶20. (C) Mikulak stated that the objective is to reach consensus by the end of the EC session in October, but Gevorgian skeptically noted that the Organization's traditional mode of operating is to go until the last minute, which in this case he said is the CSP in December. Gevorgian said that the NAM seemed intent on pushing for the CSP to make the final decision; Mikulak responded that the EC must make a recommendation and dismissed the NAM position as no longer relevant, having been an initial reaction to their fear of the process.

¶21. (C) Turning to other issues, Mikulak said that the budget does not seem problematic aside from the number of industry inspections. Gavrilov responded that, based on a meeting with the Chinese delegation the previous day, China might accept an additional one or two OCPF inspections instead of the additional three inspections proposed. Gavrilov also noted South Africa's strong opposition to the use of SSA (contract) inspectors and suggested that it might pose a problem to reaching agreement on the budget. On continued verification of converted former CW production facilities, Gavrilov said the Russian delegation will defer the issue to EC-59 in February 2010. Qwill defer the issue to EC-59 in February 2010.

¶22. (C) Mikulak asked about progress in meeting Russia's 45% destruction target by the end of the year; Gavrilov responded that destruction is on track to meet the target, though Gevorgian admitted that it will be tight. According to Gavrilov, the destruction facility at Pochev is on schedule to start operation by the end of the year and construction at Kizner also is on schedule.

CHILE AND GRULAC

¶23. (C) Mikulak and Delrep met Chilean Ambassador Juan Martabit on September 24. Martabit said that while the rules are clear and straightforward, there is no clear sense of when the "midnight hour" is that the EC must act, so the selection process will be a long one extending beyond the upcoming October EC session, and possibly beyond the next few EC sessions. Referring to the recent election of the new DG at UNESCO, Martabit said he fully expects a similar surprise at the OPCW and suggested that things could change at the last minute, including the possibility of a GRULAC candidate popping up. The selection process will be very difficult, Martabit believes, and strange alliances could emerge due to the importance countries place on having their candidate chosen. Mikulak named the U.S.'s top three candidates, and while Martabit agreed personally that they are the front-runners and would each be a good DG, he was clear that Chile does not have an official position yet. He noted that no candidate has clear support from any group and suggested that the "top actors" need to figure out amongst themselves who to support in order to narrow the field. As for GRULAC, Martabit said that aside from one or two more "militant" NAM members who are automatically supporting NAM candidates, the group is waiting for the outcome of Lomonaco's consultations and to see how things go during the EC.

¶24. (U) BEIK SENDS.

LEVIN